



# *The Chalice and the Flame*

*Diverse people. Diverse beliefs. One community.*

*A Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem, OR*

**May 2024**

## **Annual Congregational Meeting May 19**

Our annual congregational meeting will be on Sunday, May 19 after the service, beginning at noon. Lunch will be served. This meeting will be both in-person and online. Those who want to participate online can join on Zoom [with this link](#). If you will need childcare [make a childcare reservation here](#).

You can review the slate of candidates and budget before the meeting on [the Congregational Meeting 2024 webpage here](#). Only eligible members may vote at this meeting. Our bylaws require voting members to show sympathy with the Congregation's purpose as stated in Article II of the UUUCS bylaws by signing the membership book, having made a financial pledge within the last twelve months, and having made an identifiable financial contribution within the last twelve months. Verify your status at the membership table in the Fellowship Hall the next two Sundays.

If you are unable to attend the meeting you may vote with a proxy form. Proxy forms will be at the membership table for the next two Sundays and must be signed in person. The person you chose to cast your proxy votes must receive your completed form to cast your vote at the meeting. A member can hold a proxy for only one other member.

## **Compassion Concert and Presentation May 19**

UUUCS welcomes Dr. Christoph Wagner, cello, and Dr. Joanne Kong, piano, while on their West Coast tour: "Strands of Compassion." The performance will be Sunday, May 19 at 2 pm with a \$20 suggested donation. (All are welcome, regardless of ability to pay.)

Through the power of music and the spoken word, Wagner and Kong share the message that expanding our circles of compassion to nature and all animals brings about transformative spiritual growth, positive change, and planetary healing. Awaken your inner spirit!

Christoph Wagner and Joanne Kong have been praised for their impeccable ensemble and sensitive, communicative performances that convey the unique power of music. Dr Wagner, a native of Germany has a special focus on musician health, wellness, and the role of nutrition in peak performance. Dr. Kong's Ted Talk on "The Power of Plant Based Eating", has over a million views. She is editor of the book "Vegan Voices."



## **Healthcare for All Oregon May 26**

At noon on May 26, in the UUUCS Sanctuary, Rick Staggenborg, Chair of the Healthcare for All Oregon (HCAO) faith caucus will give a talk on the state of healthcare, common problems with the delivery of cost-effective healthcare, and what can be done to increase the availability of cost-effective healthcare. Rick's presentation is sponsored by the UUUCS's Social Justice Ministry.

## **Bring Flowers for Flower Communion Sunday June 2**

You are invited to bring a flower to church on June 2 and add it to the bouquet in the lobby.

Every year at UUUCS we celebrate our beloved Flower Communion ceremony on the first Sunday in June. Begun by Norbert Capek, a passionate Czech who became a Unitarian minister, the flower communion honors the unique beauty of each of us while making visible how we collectively create something bigger and beautiful. You will be amazed by the beauty that emerges from such a diversity of flowers. See for yourself!

If you forget to bring a flower, don't worry, we always have extras. At the end of the service, you are invited to take a different flower from the bouquet home with you.



## Reverential Ramblings

~ Rev. Richard Davis, UUCS's minister

Sometimes we pass by old church buildings no longer housing a congregation—either they've been repurposed into a restaurant or wedding venue, or it has become a historic landmark—and I can't help but think of those from earlier times who sacrificed and created this building both for themselves and future generations.

Then, over time a slow demise eroded the community—perhaps the demographics of the surrounding area changed, and the congregation was oblivious of the need for adaptation until it was too late. It's hard to pin the blame on anyone, but what a shame it is when it comes to this. I can't help but feel that earlier generations have been let down.

Now imagine the world a century from now when UUCS will be 175 years old—what do you suppose will be here at 5090 Cordon Road? It's hard to envision, but the deep human need UUCS now fills will not have ceased to exist, despite dire prognostications about the future of religion in our world. People will still need loving community and some sense of higher meaning and purpose in their lives.

There is a deadly fatalism afoot—some circles are resigned to the slow decay and decline of religious communities. So, I am grateful to witness how, during this ministerial transition, you are embodying the exact opposite of this. Here I see evidence of strength, resilience, and an eagerness to explore your opportunities to grow, evolve, thrive. You are honoring and embodying the commitment of those who came before you.

Over the years I've attended workshops and heard many ideas about how to approach the challenges congregations face, and it has oftentimes struck me as a misguided quest for magical solutions that do not require dedication, sacrifice, and commitment that, in fact, are essential and foundational.

In my estimation, it's simple, yet profound. This wonderful community, which I have been honored to serve and am now preparing to leave, is called to continue heeding, with ever strengthening resolve, the following four aspects of the spiritual imperative to *love*. When *love* is your motivating force then commitment and sacrifice will flow naturally as expressions of that love.

**One:** Love the stranger who comes into this community in sensitive, creative, and adaptable ways. Ask: How are we loving the newcomer? Who are we missing? Who might feel left out? How can we widen our embrace?

**Two:** Love one another, especially during times of loss and distress. Ask: How are we loving one another? Do we take the time to notice and reach out to one another? Do we offer one another forbearance and forgiveness? Do we make opportunities for friendships to form, for the fellowship and fun that brings us together?

**Three:** Love the larger surrounding community, especially where this is most needed. Ask: Who are our neighbors? How are we loving them? What are their needs? How can UUCS serve them?

**Four:** Love truth and beauty. Ask: Are we creating compelling worship and opportunities for spiritual growth that acknowledge and address the deepest yearnings of the human heart for truth and beauty—the truth that unifies and uplifts and gives meaning and purpose to our lives?

If you do remember to let love guide you during these precious days of your life, you will not get lost.

Love,

**Rick**



~Molly Brown, Director, Lifespan Religious Education~

UUCS Families and Friends,

I hope this letter finds you well and filled with the spirit of exploration and learning. As we delve into this year’s theme of “The Gifts of Our Faith” within our Lifespan Religious Education program, I am excited to share with you our focus for the coming month: Pluralism.

Pluralism, one of the cherished values within our Unitarian Universalist Association’s Article II proposal, celebrates our diversity in culture, experience, and theology. It emphasizes our commitment to learning from one another in our quest for truth and meaning, while embracing our differences with love, curiosity, and respect.

Throughout May, we will be exploring the gifts of Pluralism through four engaging sessions:

- Session One: “Many Views: We Need Each Other to Perceive the Whole!”
- Session Two: “Many Sources: We Are Made of Many Roots!”
- Session Three: “Many People: No One Gets Left Out!”
- Session Four: “Many Things to Celebrate”

I am particularly excited about the activities planned for our sessions, such as the “zoom-in-zoom-out” activity in session one, which highlights our varied perspectives, and the exploration of differences through the book, “The Sandwich Swap,” and a hummus recipe, reflecting the beauty of celebrating diversity.

In addition to our educational sessions, we have some exciting events lined up for your families:

**Parents Night Out May 10**

Parents, enjoy the night out while your children watch *Lightyear*, the new movie on Disney+ on the big screen! The date is Friday, May 10 from 6 to 9 pm The price is \$25 per child or \$40 for two, which covers dinner, drinks and snacks, movie premiere on big screen, play time on the playground, feeding the “kid friendly” farm animals, and art & crafts in art atelier.

Childcare will be provided by teachers with approved central background checks and CPR & First Aid certification. RSVP to [DLRE@uusalem.org](mailto:DLRE@uusalem.org), or 971-239-7384. [Click here for the RSVP form.](#)



**Muffins and Pastries for Mothers’ Day May 12**

Enjoy Muffins with Moms and Pastries with Parents for Mother’s Day 2024! Have a tea party with your kids. Try some delicious pastries from local vendors and enjoy some quality time with the people that are most important in your life while making new friends! Activities will be available at tables and Cozy Corner will be available for children if needed. Hope to see you all there so we can celebrate every single one of you!

## More Happenings and Highlights

### Men Meet Second and Fourth Sundays

The UUCS Men's Group meets twice a month in the Green Room on the 2nd Sunday, from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm, with personal food optional, and on the 4th Sunday from 8 am to 10 am, with a breakfast potluck. Leadership rotates among members. Meetings start and end with brief check-ins. Topics may be initiated by the leader, or emerge during check-in. Contact Steve Rosen at [sjr1948@gmail.com](mailto:sjr1948@gmail.com) if you have questions.

### UUCS Meditation Group Time Change

The UUCS Meditation Group is now meeting at 6 pm on Tuesday, rather than 7 pm. See you there!

### Landscape Cleanup Parties Meet Second and Fourth Saturdays

Landscaping Cleanup Parties meet on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month, 9 am until noon. We need your help sprucing up, including weed pulling, lawn mowing, planting plants, trimming bushes, and cleaning and repairing furniture. Please consider coming out and joining us. (You may want to bring gloves and wear a hat.)

## Getting to Know You

This month we learn about one of our UUCS members, **Teresa Farnum!**

**What brought you to UUCS?** I have been a Unitarian since joining the First Church Unitarian in Massachusetts in the early 1970's and happily found such a wonderful congregation here, since moving to Salem in 2021.

**What groups/teams/activities are you involved in at UUCS?** Chalice Circles (I write the monthly discussion guides and facilitate a group). I was in a Connections group and will attend my second Women's Retreat in June.

**What do you like about UUCS?** The support and ease in making things happen. When I was in a Connections group and envisioned a complementary program to discuss controversial social issues, I did not encounter any resistance, only support in starting Chalice Circles.

**What is one thing you would change at UUCS?** Very little! I would like to see an increase in revenue streams other than pledges to support this amazing congregation.

**What is your idea of happiness?** Hiking in the woods with my husband.

**What is something you did that you are proud of?** I started a successful consulting firm to serve colleges and universities in implementing programs that would help increase learning, success, and student graduation.

**What is your greatest extravagance?** Travel (not so much anymore!) and candy.

**What is something you do for self-care?** I walk an average of three miles a day, more if I'm stressed. I don't listen to music, podcasts, etc. while walking. It's my form of meditation.

**Who or what is the greatest love of your life?** My husband, Bruce. He is extremely intelligent, principled, and supportive, and he has treated me as a queen over the course of our 53 years of marriage.

**Who is your hero in fiction?** Don Quixote, in *The Man of La Mancha*, is optimistic and sees good everywhere.

**Who are your heroes in real life?** My husband, who—before we were even dating—when I dropped out of college and had no family, encouraged me in decisions that led to an enormously satisfying and happy life.

**What is a meaningful piece of music for you?** "You Light Up My Life," Vivaldi's "Winter," and "Vesti La Giubba." They all touch me deeply, and I have to fight back tears when I hear them.

**What is a book that you would recommend?** *Stranger in a Strange Land*, by Robert A Heinlein. It's an old science fiction story, but its message of love has stayed with me for many years.

**What is a movie or TV show you would recommend?** *The Muppet Movie*. How can you not love "The Rainbow Connection"?

**Where do you like to go in nature to revive?** Silver Falls State Park! In the summer my husband and I have a goal of heading on out there for the day once a week. We do not always make it, but we spend a good amount of time there, reading, writing, and hiking around the falls.

Do you have something you want to share for the June Newsletter? Email me at [sara@uusalem.org](mailto:sara@uusalem.org) by May 23 or catch me some Sunday and tell me, Sara Pickett!

# Sunday Services and Religious Education

<b>Religious Education</b> <i>In person, during service</i>	<b>Sunday Service</b> <i>In person and live-streamed</i>	<b>Fellowship Time</b> <i>In Hanneman Hall</i>
<b>10:30 am</b>	<b>10:30 am</b>	<b>After Service</b>
<b>May Share the Plate Recipient:</b> <a href="#">Salem Harvest</a>		

**Sunday, May 12**

**"My Faith"**

**The Rev. Richard R. Davis**

What is the faith that has guided me through my ministry? How has my faith changed, evolved over time?

**Celebrant:** Bob Muir  
**Music:** Marcia Christenson

**Sunday, May 19**

**"Old Friends"**

**Janet Stevens, Homilist/Storyteller**

Many people today can claim hundreds, if not thousands of friends on social media. I'll be sharing some stories about life-long, in-person friendships and their importance in the lives they touch.

**Celebrant:** Sara Pickett  
**Music:** UUCS Choir

**Sunday, May 26**

**"How Should You Treat Your Next Minister?"**

**The Rev. Richard R. Davis**

Someday soon someone else will be serving as the settled minister of UUCS, called by a vote of the membership. Since I know better than anyone what it feels like to serve here, I thought I might serve you some thoughts on how you can best work with and support the person who will next have the privilege of serving here.

**Celebrant:** Janet Stevens  
**Music:** Barbara Stebbins-Boaz, voice; Loriann Schmidt, piano

**Sunday, June 2**

**"Consider the Lilies of the Field."**

**The Rev. Richard R. Davis**

Please join us for our annual Flower Communion Service, a unique tradition for UU's that celebrates how each one of us brings something special and beautiful to our community. As a symbol of this, we invite you to bring a flower to add to the congregational bouquet which we will create together.

**Celebrant:** Barbara Stebbins-Boaz  
**Music:** Dennis Fisher, voice; Loriann Schmidt, piano

# Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem

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This issue was edited by Bob Muir with help from Vicki Cunningham, Elsa Struble, Kathleen McKinney, and Ross Patty.

**EVENT SCHEDULING:** use the [Event Scheduling Request](#) form on the UUCS website to add event to the UUCS calendar and/or reserve a UUCS space.

**PUBLICITY and ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Fill out the [Publication Request](#) form on the UUCS website for any announcement, event or news item. This form is a one-stop place to put a notice in the monthly newsletter, the UUCS website, the *This Week* email and/or Facebook.

**DEADLINES:**

**Newsletter:** The deadline for the **next** newsletter is 8:00 pm on Friday, **May 31, 2023.**  
**This Week** submissions are due by **Wed.**